REMARKS

The Examiner still has not indicated whether the drawings filed with the application on September 15, 1999 have been accepted. The Examiner is respectfully requested to acknowledge such an acceptance.

In the present Amendment, claim 1 has been amended to recite --controlling an ink concentration by feeding a concentrated ink and a diluent--. This amendment is supported by the specification, for example, on page 19, lines 3 to 13.

No new matter has been added and entry of the present Amendment is respectfully requested. Upon entry of the Amendment, claims 1, 2 and 4-18 will be all the claims pending in the application.

Claims 1, 2 and 5-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kato et al. (JP 10-204355) in view of Jones et al. (US Pat. No. 5,936,008), Ishii et al. (JP 10-203039) and Love, III (U.S. Pat. No. 4,718,340)

Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention is patentable over the cited references for at least the following reasons.

Applicants respectfully submit that there is no motivation to combine the cited references each of which has a different technical field. Specifically, Kato et al relates to an oil-based ink composition for an ink-jet (recording system) involving a non-contact fixation. Jones et al. discloses an ink jet printing process comprising fixing a water-based ink image on a print medium. And, finally Love III discloses a printing method in which the image is directly formed

on the surface of the plate cylinder of the printing press by using an oil-soluble ink, and the printing plate precursor is formed on the cylinder (i.e., with an on-press system).

Further, the technical advantage of fixing an oil-based ink by a heat-roll is recognized in the present invention for the first time in an original technical development of ink jet recording using a concentration ejection.

It is extremely difficult to maintain an excellent fixing property of the oil-based ink by merely combining conventional arts in the fixing of an oil-based ink by a heat-roll heating in the ink jet recording using a concentration ejection. In the present invention, the excellent fixing property is achieved in an image forming system by controlling a concentration of ink.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention would not have been obvious over the cited references. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Depósit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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